

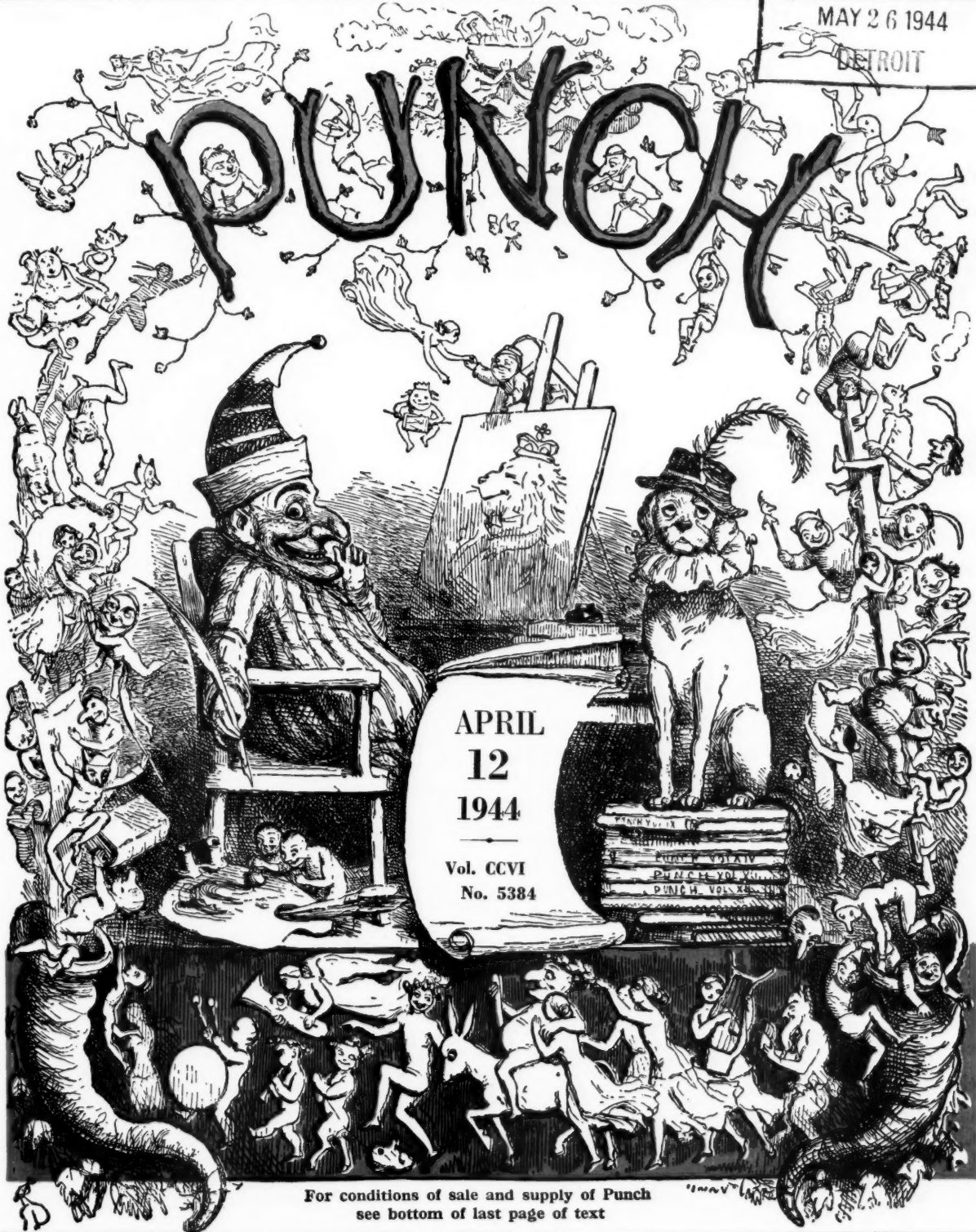
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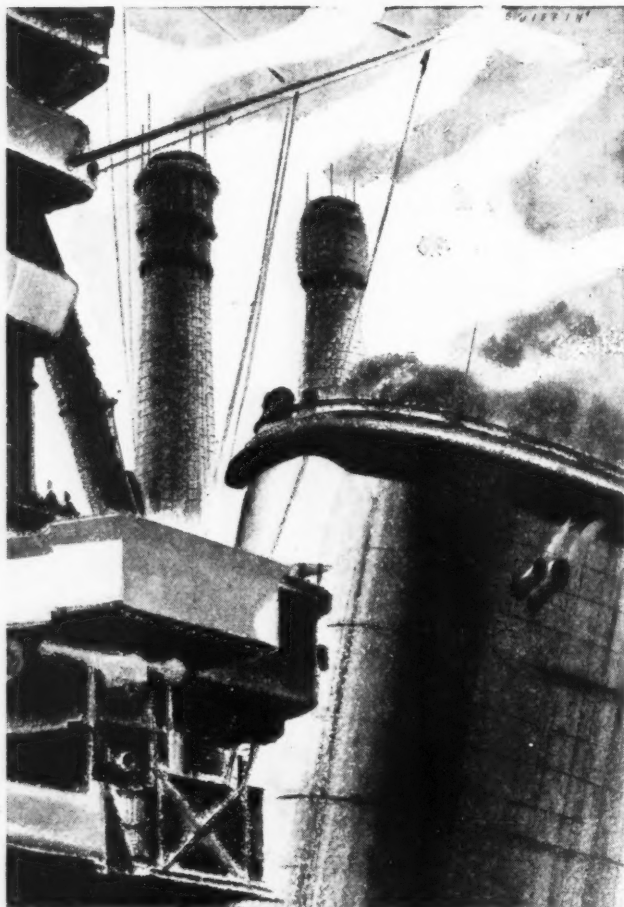


For conditions of sale and supply of Punch
 see bottom of last page of text



Imperial Typewriters

MADE IN
 GREAT BRITAIN



'A time for Deeds...'

LOOK AWAY from the man o' war's smokestack, back to those factory chimneys . . . Don't the familiar words **fuel for battle** take on a new emphatic urgency? Isn't it brought home to you, more forcibly than ever before, that fuel in its many forms is the very mainspring of our embattled resources and our ultimate driving force, to be conserved at any cost?

Are you sure that no means to husband fuel—coal, gas, electricity, steam, oil—is neglected in your own plant?

No doubt your system has worked well so far, no doubt you have enviable results to show for it . . . but is it going to stand up to the ever more exacting calls that you must still expect?

In the bluntest terms, are you prepared to use less coal—or go without?

ISSUED BY THE MINISTRY



OF FUEL AND POWER

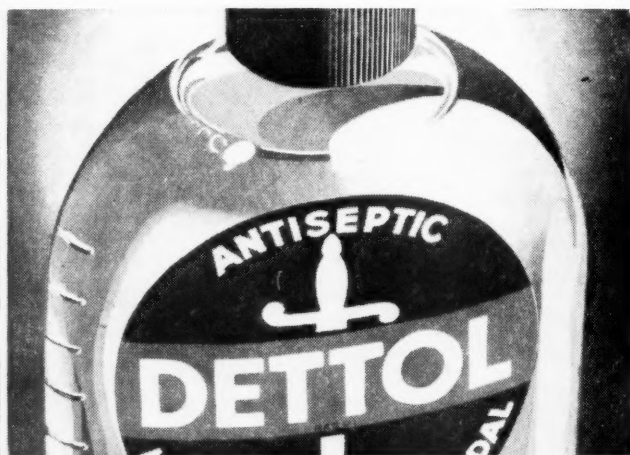


Said the Mayor to his faithful Town Clerk:
"I knit my friends socks for a lark,
For myself, my dear man,
I'm a Cardinal fan —
And I've just found a pair—keep it dark!"

WOLSEY

Cardinal Socks

RARER THAN DIAMONDS



In fighting infection in your own home, learn from the hospital. Against the germs that cause infection modern science has a modern weapon. In our great hospitals, in surgical, medical and maternity wards throughout the country, surgeons, doctors and nurses protect their patients—and protect themselves—with 'Dettol'.



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FINDLATER'S FINO, well-known to Sherry drinkers all over the World, will in future be known as

FINDLATER'S DRY FLY SHERRY

The reason: Findlater's FINO cannot be registered and protected from imitations under that name. FINDLATER'S DRY FLY is now registered throughout the World.

FINDLATER, MACKIE TODD & CO. LTD.
Wine Merchants to H.M. the King
92, Wigmore Street, W.1

TEMPORARY MEASURES

A Warning

Like many of its devotees, Coty Air Spun has had, temporarily, to change its dress—for war service. First the modified Powder Puff design. Then to meet further restrictions, the square carton containing Refill envelope. And now—a plain drum of primrose yellow in harmony with to-day's austerity demands. Small quantities of the first two are still on sale, beware of being offered Air Spun in any other pack, or even loose by weight, which can only be imitation.



"AIR SPUN"

THE FACE POWDER
THAT STAYS ON

G. 125



As a
matter

of fact . . .

there is still available in this country a cigarette which gives you a pleasure which millions seek but never find. In the full flavour and the rich aroma of the best Turkish leaf you find not the titivation of the senses but smooth soothing satisfaction. And, in Sobranie Turkish No. 6 you have this leaf blended by a master hand into a cigarette which enables you to cut down your consumption of cigarettes while you increase the pleasure of smoking. That is why we are proud to offer you the satisfaction of

SOBRANIE
TURKISH No. 6

made by the makers of BALKAN
SOBRANIE Turkish Cigarettes



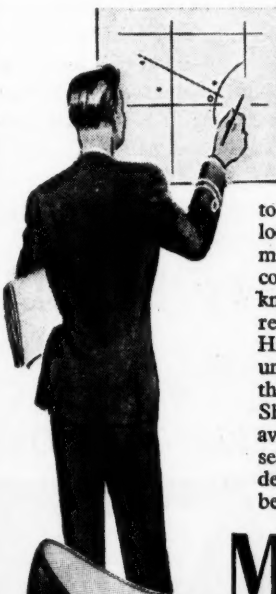
You are 'in pocket' in more than one sense when you wear a "GOR-RAY" Skirt with the new 'ZWOW' Pocket. The old, ugly pocket has gone. In its place you have an unbroken hip-line; and on the other side, an attractive, man-style pocket. There are no buttons or metal gadgets to cause hip bulge; and although the skirt fastens at the waistband, undergarments cannot possibly show through.

★ Good drapers and stores everywhere stock "GOR-RAY" Skirts in a variety of attractive styles.

All the better for the 'Zwow' Pocket

Issued by:
C. STILLITZ, Royal Leamington Spa Scientific

GOR-RAY
Skirts



Hidden Reserves

To be frank, there is little to choose between one good-looking shoe and another, on mere appearance. But, with nine coupons at stake, it is as well to know that Moccasin Shoes have reserves of wearing-power. Hidden details; inside finish, unskimped workmanship, make them keep their shape. Moccasin Shoes may not always be readily available, but they are worth searching for! We can be confident that your first pair will not be your last.

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ILFORD makers of **SELO** films
LIMITED



"In the present state of medical knowledge..."

Never have doctors been more ready to admit tomorrow's discoveries may reverse today's beliefs. Yet every test and experiment confirms the fact that nerves, to keep healthy, need organic phosphorus and protein. And that is only another way of saying that they need 'Sanatogen' Nerve Tonic, for 'Sanatogen' contains organic phosphorus and protein in ideal combination. Ask your chemist for a tin today.

'SANATOGEN'

Regd. Trade Mark.

NERVE TONIC

In one size only during wartime—6/6d.
A 'GENATOSAN' Product.



Barrels and all other packages are in short supply and it is essential to return empties for refilling as soon as possible. Transport delays may impede deliveries but we know you will understand.

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The Choice
DEVON CYDERS

Ino. Symons & Co., Ltd., Totnes, Devon.
& Butcher Row, Raichide, London, E.14.

Your Hair Brush rebristled

I specialise in replacing bristles in worn brushes. Forward your Ivory, Silver or Ebony brushes, when quotation will be sent by return of post.

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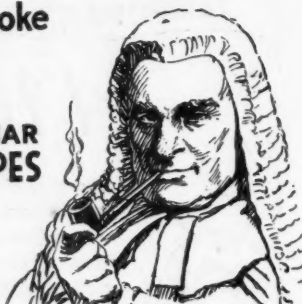
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All shrewd Judges smoke

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The demand for Orlik pipes far exceeds the supply, but the quality is still as good as ever. If you have difficulty in obtaining a genuine Orlik London Made pipe, please write to us for address of the nearest Tobacconist who can supply you.

L. ORLIK, LTD., LONDON, E.C.1
Established 1899



Also PETROL LIGHTERS & POUCHES
Orlik wind-proof Petrol Lighters give a sure light for cigarette or pipe, indoors or out. Orlik Pouches in a variety of styles.

"THE BEST APPOINTMENT I EVER MADE!"

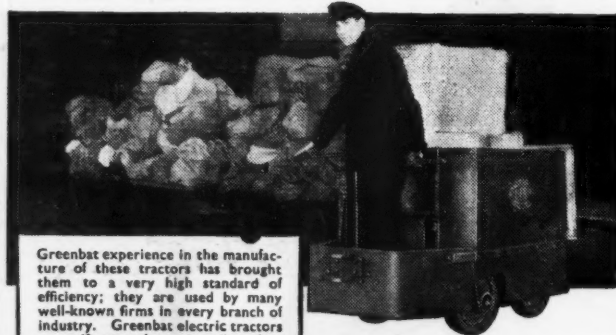


This dentist's feet were breaking down under the strain. At last, on his doctor's advice, he came to Scholl's. It was the best appointment he ever made! For at Scholl's we make the most searching examination and track every foot-defect to its source. Then, we devise remedial treatment which brings ease and, in a short time, gives you thoroughly sound feet.

Scholl Foot Aids and Appliances are obtainable from Scholl Depots, chemists, shoe-dealers and stores.

Footnotes by SCHOLL

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Greenbat experience in the manufacture of these tractors has brought them to a very high standard of efficiency; they are used by many well-known firms in every branch of industry. Greenbat electric tractors are swift, smooth running, silent, free from fumes and fire risk—there is no fuel problem either.

GREENWOOD & BATLEY LTD.
LEEDS ENGLAND

**PUT
and
TAKE!**

If good crops are to be grown on the soil, good plant food must be put into it. And now is the time to do the job—when the ground is being finally prepared for sowing.

What do I do...?

I buy some 'National Growmore Fertiliser' (which is made to a Ministry of Agriculture formula), or some other good general fertiliser. I rake it into the prepared ground, at the rate of 1 lb. to every 10 sq. yds.—or as instructed by the makers.

I do this job several days before sowing, so that my crops will get a good start.

Issued by the Ministry of Information

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the Brewers' Society

Valstar
"66" Raincoat

SUPERLATIVE
QUALITY AND
DESIGN

IN NORMAL TIMES THE BEST SHOPS
HAVE THE VALSTAR "66" RAIN-
COAT—SUPPLIES NOW, HOWEVER, ARE
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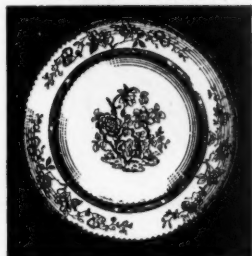
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SHIRTS AND
"VAN HEUSEN"
COLLARS

Made to match

REMEMBER SPODE

A Great Name in
Good China



CHINESE ROSE

"We plan to resume
production of this design
after the war."

Spode

The China of Distinction

W. T. COPELAND & SONS LIMITED
SPODE WORKS, STOKE-ON-TRENT

'Celanese' TRADE MARK products

Look back and remember
the infinite variety and inexhaustible supply
of things made of 'Celanese'. Those indeed
were days of plenty. . . .

You have accepted, however, that in a
world at war things must be different.
Supplies are controlled by Government regu-
lations, there are shortages of labour and raw
materials—there are problems of distribution.
But a quantity of 'Celanese' Utility Fabrics
is being produced for civilian use and the
Quality is excellent.

We ask you now to look ahead. For
whilst we are so busily engaged in fulfilling
wartime needs of the Forces, the Future of
'Celanese' is taking shape. New and inter-
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qualities are there—waiting for Peace, when
they can be released to you in ample supply.



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CELESTA
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15/6 per bottle

Rare, but still the same super-
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Sherry from the sun-drenched
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W. H. CHAPLIN & CO. LTD. Estd. 1847
Wholesale Wine and Spirit Merchants, Distillers
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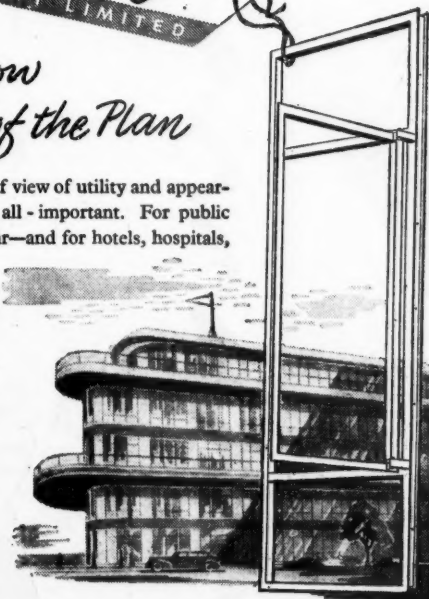
For over half a century
STATE EXPRESS 555
have maintained their
reputation as the world's
finest cigarettes.

THE HOUSE OF STATE EXPRESS
210, PICCADILLY, LONDON, W.1

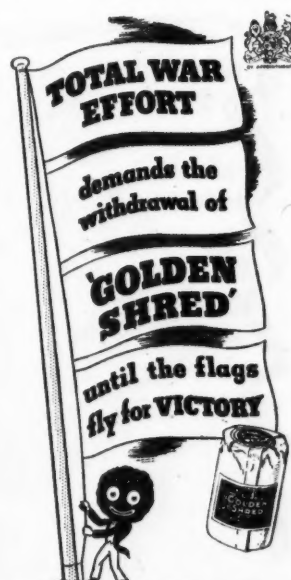


The Window
is part of the Plan

Both from the point of view of utility and appear-
ance, the window is all-important. For public
buildings after the war—and for hotels, hospitals,
factories, private
houses, etc.—there
will be Rustproof
Metal Windows,
giving maximum
durability with mini-
mum cost of upkeep.



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DEVA WORKS, SALTNEY, CHESTER. LONDON OFFICE:
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'Golden Shred'
The World's Best
Marmalade

JAMES ROBERTSON AND SONS (P.M.) LTD.
Golden Shred Works
London Paisley Manchester Bristol



Points and Mr. Disraeli

Zoning and points would have been strange words to Mr. Disraeli in the days of bustles and broughams. But even in those days Romary was a word that meant high quality and distinction in biscuits. When to-day's wartime restrictions become things of the past, you'll be able to get Romary again in full supply.

ROMARY

'Tunbridge Wells' Biscuits

Sports Appeal



by
Swan

● AN OUTDOOR MODEL BY

CROCKETT & JONES, NORTHAMPTON

MANUFACTURERS OF

'SWAN' SHOES & 'HEALTH' SHOES

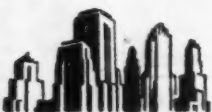
CVS-105



Specially prepared by
Abdulla for all lovers of
the American style cigarette.

Fifth Avenue . 20 for 2/4

173 New Bond Street, W.1



Monk & Glass

CUSTARD

One of the jolly good
things that's scarce

Still the same high quality
Sold by all good grocers





PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCVI No. 5384

April 12 1944

Charivaria

"THE Second Front is bound to have repercussions in our larders," says a domestic writer. We shan't be able to keep our powders dry much longer.

Record prices have just been paid for whisky in Belfast. English musical enthusiasts complain that they are paying whisky prices for records.

"The first time I saw him was at Treherbert Eisteddfod in the winter of 1874-1895."—*Welsh publication.*

One of those real old-fashioned winters.

A colour-scientist states that people subject to colds should wear a belt of yellow silk. The practice might degenerate, however, into a mere stunt for keeping off creditors.



A correspondent wants to know how many post-war years will elapse before there are Test Matches with Australia. Patience, patience! One peace at a time.

Hitler has been complaining that he doesn't know where to look for his friends. This is probably what comes of not putting them all in the same cemetery.

The Japanese as a race are myopic, says an oculist. In Tokyo it is beginning to be realized that their Pacific policy was a short-sighted one.

Plans to evacuate the more old-fashioned of the Japanese cities are believed to be due to paper shortage.

A journalist with a telescope on the south coast could see what time it was by a public clock in Calais. He's not the only one waiting for his watch to be repaired.



With all due respect to our elaborate precautions, we we can't help thinking that the outside world won't be really baffled about our weather conditions until we allow our forecasters space in the newspapers again.

A man whose wife had been missing for eight hours telephoned Scotland Yard and she was returned to him almost immediately. The police simply combed the queues.

Armed patrols are being used by the Nazis on the Danube. So far, however, they have failed to persuade it that there is any better course for it than its own.

Shopkeepers recently had to queue in a wholesale market. Their own queues were simply left standing.

"The leek is hardier than the onion," says a gardening note. It seems able to stand up to no end of war-time recipes.

Bigamy has increased 500 per cent. since the war began, says a report. Normally of course it is only a 100 per cent. increase.



"Medium height—fifty-eight years of age—looking not unlike Delius, Eric Coates's hair is slowly greying after years of producing some of the most popular music the world has known."

Daily paper.

There's hair!

People in the know are keeping pretty mum about the Second Front, but we can't help remarking at the number of high-placed spokesmen who are having a lot to say about not being able to say much about a lot of things they would like to say something about.

Sorry for This One

I MUST go down to the sea again, to the crowded sea and the prom,
With Albert, Arthur and Maudie, and Jane, and Uncle Tom,
And a high lark in the *Skylark*, and the young kids yawning
And a good tea on the old pier, and a great time prawning.

I must go down to the sea again, for the call of the Southern line

Is a high call and a shrill call, and only eleven and nine,
And all I ask is a broiling day and the brown chips frying
And a fun-fair and skee-balls and a speed-boat plying.

I must go down to the sea again, because of the lovely band,
For a whole day or a half-day, and cover myself with sand,
And all I ask is a third return to the East or West of Dover
And a swim-suit and a sun tan—when the long war's over.

EVOE.

Odds and Ends

I HOPE everyone won't think us unsociable," said John after dinner on Saturday, opening his briefcase, "if Caroline and I devote this evening of our week-end to clearing up the odds and ends which."

"Which what?" said his Aunt Mary after a pause.

"Accumulate," said John. "It was such a long sentence already."

"It might be quite a good idea," said Aunt Mary. "There is a letter—"

"Oh, dear," said Mrs. Hope. "That reminds me."

"Won't it be very dull for you?" said Aunt Mary to the Pilot-Officer, who was becoming rather a fixture. "Rather not!" said the Pilot-Officer. Judith and I said we didn't mind either, Judith adding that she had actually brought her sewing.

Suddenly Caroline gave a little scream and pounced on an air-letter. "Bingo!" she cried. "Darling! He's written!"

"Mm?" said John, who was reading a printed form. "Oh, yes. I was just going to show you. What the hell? I thought this was income-tax and it's the police."

"John!" said Aunt Mary anxiously. "What have you done?"

"Mm?" said John. "It's all right, it only came this morning. Well, really. I suppose they have to." In the silence which followed Mrs. Hope was heard to ask if Aunt Mary could spare some writing-paper, and to add, "Oh, but I always think lines are such fun. Like school."

"Rather!" said the Pilot-Officer, who seemed to think it was his turn. He was winding a reel of thread for Judith, who dangled something from a furry slipper-sole.

"Dear Bingo!" said Caroline. "He was nearly bitten by a scorpion. Darling, fancy *Bingo* being nearly bitten by a scorpion!"

"Mm?" said John. "I don't see why I should want a left-hand child's glove. The whole thing's immoral." He scribbled something on the form.

"You see," Judith was saying, "it's just odd bits of wool, treble thickness, and it saves seven coupons, unless it's five." The Pilot-Officer fairly glowed with interest, and

Judith dug a needle through the sole and cried, "Oh! That's the third needle."

"You couldn't sell me an air-letter form, Aunt Mary?" said Caroline. "I must write to Bingo this minute or burst."

"I think so," said Aunt Mary, opening the writing-desk drawer. "Why yes. And just look! The notepaper from Leamington! That would be before 1930. Now I *must* get down to my letter-writing. No, *really*, Caroline. Well, for the Comforts Fund."

"Please advise me, Mary," said Mrs. Hope. "No, really, I'm happier with lines. My sister-in-law has—"

"John," said Aunt Mary. "Tell me about those police."

"Oh, that," said John. "I found a glove. So I gave it to the local policeman, and now the sticklers say I can have it back if not claimed."

"I always say they're wonderful," said Aunt Mary.

"What it amounts to is this," said Mrs. Hope. "My sister-in-law has offered me an old arm-chair cover in exchange for the lampshade, and I don't see how I can use it, but it would be foolish these days to refuse, wouldn't it?"

"Depends if you've got an old arm-chair," said John briskly. "Now. I've told that guy where he gets off. I'm enjoying this."

"Oh, yes, it will," said Judith earnestly to the Pilot-Officer. "You see, I sew the heel on that way up, not that way up, and it sort of bends over, you see."

"Splendid!" said the Pilot-Officer.

"You aren't being rude to the poor police, John?" said Aunt Mary. "After all, they meant well."

"I was nice to *him*," said John. "I wrote yards explaining gently. No, it was the guy who insists that in answer to my query I have no dog-licence."

"But you have no dog," said Aunt Mary. "Why *should* you ask him?"

"Exactly," said John. "What did you say, darling?"

"Was when Bingo trod on that jellyfish 1934?" said Caroline. "I know I've told you about it."

"There!" said Judith.

"Wonderful!" said the Pilot-Officer. "Wonderfully warm, I should imagine."

"I could make a little blouse," said Mrs. Hope doubtfully. "It would be chintz. An all-over leaf pattern in red."

"What is that, Judith?" said Aunt Mary, looking up from the Leamington notepaper. "Are you making some slippers?"

"Yes," said Judith eagerly. "You see, you buy these furry soles for six-and-six, no coupons, and then you—*oh*." She held up half a needle. "The fourth."

"Of course," said Mrs. Hope. "I do rather regret the lampshade."

"A chintz blouse might not look so bad," said Judith. "With a black suit." She paused. "Mrs. Hope. Are you *definitely* not wanting it?"

"Dear Sir," said John, "In answer to your letter I can only repeat that I must be someone else. I do not own a dog, never have owned a dog, never will own a dog—"

"*Darling!*" said Caroline, looking up. "You know the very first thing we shall do is go straight out and buy a dachs."

"You don't think I'm going to tell him that?" said John. "When you hear a word you sometimes write it by mistake," said Aunt Mary. "I've put 'We had an awful dog yesterday trying to mend the washer under the sink.'"

"Oh, do leave it," said Caroline. "It's sweet. Here, darling," she handed John the air-letter form, "you take over. The jellyfish was Charmouth anyway. Dear Bingo."

"Do you know," said Judith to the room at large, "my present dressing-gown is an old camel-hair coat from a vast



PRIORITY PLANS



aunt which reached to the ground, and all I did was pad the shoulders and take in the side-seams and——”

“Darling!” said Caroline. “What’s all this here about a glove?”

“I found it in the road,” said John. “So I gave it to a policeman.”

“You found something in the road, John?” said Mrs. Hope.

“I found a left-hand child’s glove,” said John patiently.

Mrs. Hope clicked her tongue. “Some poor child must have dropped it. What did you do with it?”

“I gave it to a policeman,” said John, very patiently.

“If you’ve got one you really don’t need,” said Judith to the Pilot-Officer, “it would make a lovely jacket, because probably I should only have to take it in on the shoulders and down the side-seams and——”

“Darling,” said Caroline. “Really. You can’t claim a left-hand glove from some starving child.”

“I’m not claiming it,” said John. “Look in the corner. That’s me breaking it gently that I don’t want the blasted thing.”

“It still looks like ‘dog,’” said Aunt Mary. “I’ll put a little note in the margin. Don’t you think the poor child will trace the glove, John? Or its mother?”

“I don’t know, Aunt Mary,” said John very patiently indeed. “All I know is,” and he drew a deep breath, “I DON’T WANT IT.”

“Well, from what you’ve put,” said Caroline, “you do. Thank you very much. In the event of the glove being

claimed I do not wish to do anything about it.’ That means you won’t fight it in court if the wretched child gets there first, but otherwise——”

“Here,” said John, snatching the form. “I only left out the ‘un’ before ‘claimed.’ There. And that——” he scribbled fiercely—“clinches it.”

“I do not, in fact, want the glove whatever happens to it, whether the miserable child claims it or not.” Well, really, darling,” said Caroline, “you needn’t be rude. After all, the poor police are only——”

“Here,” said John. He folded the form and put it back in the brief-case.

“Now let’s see,” said Caroline. “‘Dear Sir,—In answer to your query we are unable to—whatever’s this, darling? Someone says you haven’t got a dog-licence.’”

“Here,” said John. He handed her back the air-letter form. “Now. You concentrate on Bingo and I’ll deal with left-handed dogs and all the things I’ve got to struggle through before the evening is out.”

“We aren’t being very successful, are we?” said Aunt Mary, switching on the wireless for the news.

“Don’t you think so?” said Judith, holding up the slipper. “I was just saying to myself——”

“Rather!” said the Pilot-Officer.

o o

“Boy wanted, over 14, to feed comedian.”—*Advt. in theatrical paper.* Another of those faddists!

Piano Specification

"LEONARDO DA VINCI," said the wireless, "was a universal genius. There was hardly a subject of study in his time upon which he was not an expert. Painter, architect, engineer, shipwright—"

With another turn of the knob the landlord extended his flight to the Continent. One day perhaps, to his great relief, someone will convince him that trade will improve if he will turn it off altogether.

"That chap the wireless was talking about," said the ships' store dealer's runner, regarding the fallen level of his tankard moodily, "might 'ave been in my trade. That's 'ow we 'ave to be. One minute it's the size of rope for a thirty-'undredweight load and next minute it's persuading the Captain that the curtain material with roses suits 'is cabin better than the flying parrots what 'e's set 'is 'eart on. And if ever you admit you don't know everything about anything, as like as not the Stores Superintendent will give the order to another firm.

"Of course, when you've been in the game as long as me there's 'ardly anything you don't know about, and when you are caught out you can generally 'edge a bit in the 'ope that the shipowners' man doesn't know any more than you do.

"Take the other day—one of my customers says to me 'I want a piano for the 'Erculaneum when she comes in. Can you do it?' Now it so 'appens I've never 'andled pianos, they being uncommon on cargo tonnage and most of what orders there are being placed direct. But of course I wasn't going to let on and give 'im all the trouble, maybe, of going to someone else for it. What you 'ave to do in a case like this is to use your general knowledge and dore your customer out so as to get a specification.

"Certainly we can, Mr. 'Odges,' I says. 'Mind you, there's a shortage, and if you 'appened to be thinking of fitting the fleet out you couldn't do better than book a few now for the other ships.'

"No, there's nothing like that in it," 'e says. 'She 'ad a piano when we took 'er over, and it was on the storm-damage list last voyage, otherwise we wouldn't replace it, she not being entitled to one.'

"Well,' I says, 'was it any particular kind of piano you was thinking of? Would you like me to go on board when she arrives and get the details from the Master?'

"There's no time for that," 'e says. 'She won't be in for more than forty-eight hours. You'd better tell me what kinds of pianos you 'ave in stock. It may as well be a good loud one that'll last. There's no sense in being cheese-paring, as it comes on the underwriters.'

"I think you'll 'ave to give me a line or two," I says. 'I can't keep a list in my 'ead of all the pianos we have coming in and out, day to day. What colour was it you 'ad in mind?'

"It don't matter about colour," 'e says, 'not in war-time. The carpenter can paint it up when she gets to sea.'

"Well,' I says, feeling my way, 'that makes it easier. 'Ow about size? You wouldn't 'ardly want it for more than one, would you?'

"No," 'e says, 'not on a cargo ship. It would be different if she was carrying passengers, where you might get two or three wanting to play at once. Just an 'andy size for one'll do. You want to see that it 'as as many notes as you can. I've 'eard my daughter grumble about pianos being short of 'em.'

"That's an important point," I says. 'I expect you'll want one of the kind with black notes as well as white?'

"Ah, now you're getting technical," 'e says. 'That's the worst of you ships' store people. What's the difference?'

"That's 'ard to explain," I said, 'you not being a player yourself. It's all according to what you're

trying to play. There's some pieces you 'ave to 'ave the black notes for. But of course if you 'ave the black you can't expect to get so many white.'

"You do what you think's right about that," 'e says. 'There's no sense in cutting 'em down, seeing it's for the underwriters' account.'

"Well,' I says, 'that's about all I want to know, except about the 'andle. Where would you like that? Mostly, if you notice, the 'andle's at one end, but of course you 'ave to 'ave it where you can get at it.'

"That's the sort of thing you get," 'e says. 'The Master don't say a word about it in 'is demand. 'E expects us to guess that sort of thing. You send 'im one with the 'andle at the end and if it's wrong the Chief Engineer will 'ave to alter it on the voyage, and per'aps it'll teach 'em a lesson.'

"Now, there's a case for you," went on the ships' store dealer's runner. "When 'e spoke to me first I knew no more about pianos than you do, never 'aving sold one before, and the Superintendent 'imself didn't realize 'ow much 'e knew till I started droring 'im out. I never let 'im see that I was picking 'is brains all the time. But just by asking the right kind of questions I got a specification out of 'im in no time.

"Of course in the end, there being no new ones available, she 'ad to take what we could get, which 'appened to be a second-'and one belonging to a friend of mine."

A. M. C.



"Button undone—take his name."

At the Pictures

SUPERNATURAL

A KIND of film I normally regard without any enthusiasm is that which involves the beautiful heroine's becoming a nun to the sound, never throughout the film very far off, of angelic choirs and emotional sugary chords played on the organ (or long-drawn-out by an orchestra to suggest an organ). *The Song of Bernadette* (Director: HENRY KING) is emphatically this kind of film, and it lasts for two hours and a half; but it contains much to conciliate even the crustiest and most prejudiced objector. For one thing it goes all out to be a straightforward account of a village girl who saw divine visions, and makes no attempt at that far more popular and highly profitable genre, the queasy sensational mixture of religion and passionate love. The mistake in this picture, as I see it, is that once or twice we, the audience, are shown the vision seen by *Bernadette*; which is not only unfair (for the story loses a part of its power if we are explicitly given as a fact something that the characters had to establish by words and believe by faith) but also aesthetically unimpressive, if not regrettable.

The story is of *Bernadette Soubirous*, of Lourdes, of her simple certainty in 1858 that she had divine visions, and of how everybody else gradually came to believe her. It is quietly and in places obviously told, well photographed, with a wealth of sound playing in minor parts and a strikingly good and already rewarded newcomer, JENNIFER JONES, as *Bernadette*. The "brighter" moments (one feels that the reverently-treading film-makers would hardly venture to describe them as comic relief, which is what they are) are

amusingly done by AUBREY MATHER as *Lacade*, the Mayor of Lourdes, and other good players as other cynical or commercially-minded civic officials; in these scenes too the photography is particularly interesting. I should never choose to go to this kind of film, and it is not the sort of thing I can actively

enjoy as a whole, but I found plenty of enjoyable moments.

Of the other "big Easter attractions" I have seen only *The Uninvited* (Director: LEWIS ALLEN), which also depends on the supernatural but without any theological reference. This is "said to be the first serious ghost story" on the films—that is, the ghosts are unexplained, you have to accept them as there, the plot is unravelled as a result of the deliberate attempt of the characters to find out what the ghosts want and to satisfy them; the story is not told any more seriously than the usual light thriller. I found it entertaining, though here again is a type of film I should not normally choose to see. The piece is quite unimportant, but well done, amusing and often exciting, whether you accept the ghosts or not.



[The Song of Bernadette]

THE SCEPTICS

Jacomot	CHARLES DINGLE
Lacade	AUBREY MATHER
Bernadette	JENNIFER JONES
Dutour	VINCENT PRICE



[Standing Room Only]

CLOTHES SHORTAGE

Major Cromwell	ANNE REVERE
Stephens	FRED MACMURRAY
Cromwell	ROLAND YOUNG

It was preceded at the Plaza by an "escapist" comedy which I would have mentioned a fortnight ago if there had been room, and which still seems to me the most enjoyable of the films on view at the moment of writing: *Standing Room Only* (Director: SIDNEY LANFIELD). I would very willingly see this again, which is more than I can say for either of the two others mentioned above. Based on the well-known problem of finding living-space in war-time Washington, this has FRED MACMURRAY and PAULETTE GODDARD as a visiting business man and his secretary pretending to be a butler and a cook so as to get somewhere to sleep. The obvious theme is embroidered with comic incident and a good deal of genuinely funny dialogue, the moments of slapstick are nicely calculated to wring delighted yells from the spectator, and the skilful playing is a pleasure to watch. (Note, by the way, that ANNE REVERE is also the mother in *Bernadette*.) R. M.

O to be in Englishmen

LORD GEDDES went so far in the House of Lords recently as to declare that the typical second or third generation factory-hand in any of our industrial cities who lives on imported food is not an Englishman at all so far as his chemical make-up is concerned."

I was two and a half paragraphs past this sentence in the *Daily Mail* before its full significance struck me. The delay was due, I suppose, to the sluggish behaviour of my subconscious. It has been definitely off colour for some time. But as soon as it had analysed "the typical second or third generation factory-hand" and had sent up its interim report I knew that I was on to something.

That sentence, you see, referred to me. My grandfather Thomas worked for fifty years at Duff's, the sanitary potters. My father worked there for forty-two years. I worked there for fifteen years—until 1940. In a few moments I relived all those years of toil. I saw my ancestors, perhaps for the first time, as they really were—as Arnold Bennett might have described them. And my pride in them grew. They were not gentlefolk: they had no money. But they were, I swear, honest - to - goodness hard - drinking Englishmen.

It is a pretty harsh thing to tell a man who thinks he is an Englishman by birth and knows he is in the British Army that he is "not an Englishman at all so far as his chemical make-up is concerned." For some minutes I cried bitterly, and a passing sergeant patted me on the head with the comment: "Take it easy, Shorty, I don't mean half what I say." Then my defence mechanisms began to tick over. My pulse beat faster. Somewhere, deep down, something snapped. I put both hands in my pockets and decided not to accept the statement at its face value.

A long time ago I read somewhere that an ordinary adult male consists of:

1. Enough iron to make fourteen paper-clips or one bar of a small bird-cage.
2. Enough phosphorus to put a knob on one or more match-sticks.
3. Enough calcium to make a miniature wold.
4. Enough water for an austerity bath.

There were other ingredients—metals, conglomerates, etc.—but I forget the exact quantities. Some authorities

put the moisture content as high as ninety-nine per cent. In order to discover the chemical origin of our factory-hand we have, therefore, to trace his water-supply to its source. I have done this, and I should like to address a few questions to the author of the attack upon my birthright.

1. Of what nationality are fish caught outside territorial waters?
2. Most of the water which (in various forms) is drunk in Britain is conveyed to these islands by the

prevailing south-west winds. These, I am told, have their origin in the Caribbean Sea. Does this make Caribs of us all?

3. Which is chemically speaking the more suspect—a third generation nobleman who consumes French wines and *pâté de foie gras*, Portuguese port and Russian caviare, or a third generation British workman who lives on British beer and fish-and-chips?

I do not expect replies.



THE SUBALTERN IN THE SERVICE CLUB



"Of course the problem these days is to keep the food where you can get at it and the cook can't."

The Phoney Phleet

XLII—H.M.S. "So-So"

FOR rather more than twenty generations
The Hedgers had been lawyers to a man
Peculiarly strong on arbitrations—
They saw both sides at once. Few people can.

Carew, the current holder of the title,
Possessed this family bent in marked degree;
On any point at all, however vital,
He always had two views and sometimes three.

When war broke out young Hedger joined the Navy
Though not because for once he knew his mind;
He did it since the sea was nice and wavy,
Not rigid, unilateral, defined.

After a while they gave him a commission
Appointing him to H.M.S. *So-So*.
Which placed him in the horrible position
Of having to say "Yes" or even "No."

For instance, if a man fell in the ocean
The crew appealed to him. "What do you think?
Shall we restrain the *So-So's* forward motion,
Or shall, we, sir, leave Nobby in the drink?"

They'd see an iceberg. "Sir," the men would clamour,
"Hard a-starboard, sir, or soft a-port?"
They'd meet a cruiser. "Please, sir, do we ram her,
Or go on leave, sir?" Questions of that sort.

His ancestry no less than his profession
Impelled him to be fair, yes, *Laissez-faire*;
But this involved a somewhat lengthy session
For which there wasn't any time to spare.

He used to stand there hawing and rambling
"Solution A is wrong; but is B right?"
At last he took to open barefaced gambling—
"Heads we vamoose or tails we stay and fight."

Alack! (and I am speaking with precision)
This method was a shattering success
Carew had what appeared to be prevision.
But *did* it get his morals in a mess!

Believing that some special revelation
Was given him alone of all mankind
He cast the die in every situation,
Abandoning all effort of the mind.

There came the Peace. Men melted down their helmets,
Their cannon, into bars of useful pig.
Sailors transformed their hammocks into pelmets,
Carew re-knitted his to make a wig.

Restored to what had been his growing practice
He took the new philosophy too far.
"Who cares," he cried, "one button what the Act is?
Let's toss a coin! Up she goes! Houp-là!"

This means of handling knotty legal questions
Found very little favour with the Bench.
The Privy Council proffered some suggestions
And Hedger was disbarred. This was a wrench.

The family accused him of defacing
Those twenty generations with a blot.
Carew, most deeply moved, went in for racing
And made it pay like billy-o. So what!

THE SPRING HAS COME?

THE Spring has come for you and me
But not for sailors on the sea.
They may receive a daily tot
Of Navy rum to keep them hot,
They may accept a morning gin
To hold the central heating in.
But though these drinks create a glow
Can they rebuff the ice or snow?
Can artificial stimulants
Compete with heavy under-pants?
The answer's in the negative.
It's only woollen goods that give
Complete protection (which they need)
To naval ratings (Nelson's breed).

So up, ye knitters! Up, and knit
A scarf, some gloves (and see they fit),
Sea-boot stockings, helmets too,
As long as they're in Navy blue.
But if you lack the wool, or skill,
Please write a largish cheque and fill
It in to PUNCH'S COMFORTS FUND;
Address it "Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4." And may we plead
That he gives twice who gives with speed?

Registered under the War Charities Act, 1940

H. J.'s Dramatic Fragments

THE next fragment was largely caused by B. Smith's inventing a new international language called Linguish, intended to prevent jealousies arising from similarities between a world tongue and that of any particular nation. He tried hard to construct something as remote as possible from any known form of human speech, and therefore the alphabet was new, the grammar was new and the sounds it made were new. Concentration on this task made him forgetful and abstracted, so that two gongs and a starting-pistol were insufficient to get him in to meals in time. Politeness forced me to sit toying with the tail end of my food so that he would not have to eat alone, and this led to a good deal in the way of drama as well as a tendency for the suet-pudding from lunch to merge into the cucumber sandwiches for low-tea, and thence into the rissoles for high.

MARKED CARDS: A TALE OF DEAR OLD BAGDAD

(The scene is a merry fair-ground.)

COCONUT SHYSTER. Six knobs a bob. Six knobs a bob. Knock 'em off their perch and they're yours. Miss 'em and you have at any rate been entertained in a mild sort of way.

MAN WITH A MEGAPHONE. Step right in and see the Chinaman with the double-jointed clavicle. He also juggles with two spanners.

FORTUNE TELLER. I'll tell your fortune from a teacup. Bring one you've used recently; strainers disqualify.

FAT WOMAN'S HUSBAND. Sixpence to see the wife. Sixpence to see the wife. Embonpoint with aplomb. Jocose, adipose, grandiose, as shown at Balmoral and Smithfield, and, of course, here.

Enter PROFESSOR FLOSSIE BUDD with a Seminar in Sociology

FLOSSIE. To-day's field-work will be on popular amusements. I shall first conduct the demonstration interview, taking this man who is approaching us as my subject. Watch my grip. Left hand on sleeve, right over and under elbow. . . . Now, sir, what income group do you fall into?

SUBJECT. I live on capital.

FLOSSIE. Oh—well, what is your age group?

SUBJECT. Nobody won't tell me. Not one of them. Aunt Humility, Grannie the Bank, Oom Paul the Coachman, mute as newts they all are.

FLOSSIE. Occupation?

SUBJECT. Ghost soprano. You knows. Operatical autobiographies.

FLOSSIE. Are you enjoying yourself, and if so, how and why?

SUBJECT. No, that I'm not; there's a nail in my shoe.

FLOSSIE. Thank you for your assistance. I fear you do not quite fit into our categories. We shall not detain you further.

SUBJECT. Well, if you think I am going away you're wrong. Having someone to talk to takes my mind off my foot.

A LOUD-SPEAKER. Has anyone found a small square child responding to the name of the Archduchess Plektra of Spetz? If so, they may claim on Form 84b, obtainable from the Carpathian Legation; and do please look out for burning cigarette-ends.

(The Seminar passes the booth where five talking horses are holding a Brains Trust, and turning right by

the C.E.M.A. Exhibition of Welsh book-plates, enters the Waxworks Show.)

GUIDE. Here we see Mr. Lloyd George playing golf; if you press the button he replaces the divot. Next, we have Diogenes in his tub; if you peep through the bung-hole you will see a small mole on the philosopher's cheek. We now turn to an historical scene: the Black Prince, having won his spurs, is being instructed in their use by all and sundry.

A VISITOR. What would you say is the best kind of wax to use, mercolized or bees'?

GUIDE. Questions at the end.

VISITOR. I would have you know I am a King's Messenger, sir.

GUIDE. The cashier will sign for it. Our next tableau is instructional, and represents the manufacture of pottery dwarfs for gardens. The stage selected is the placing of the damp clay on the wheel. Our tour ends with a Cavalcade of Modern Heroes, they being, from left to right, Zola, Grace Darling, and Sir Bernard Spilsbury.

(The Seminar leaves the Waxworks and examines the Government Publicity Exhibit, which is a statue of Britannia holding a graph representing the growth in expenditure on Government publicity since 1900.)

LOUD-SPEAKER. Stand by for a greeting from the Convocation of the University of Oxford. Ave . . . Pardon, it should be two syllables, Ave. And here is a Police Message: Will someone please tell the constable who is directing traffic in the middle of the Fair, P. C. Simpson by name, that he has been awarded third prize in the inter-Station Spelling contest, beating his runner-up by having only a single mistake in the word "November"?

FLOSSIE (to her Seminar). I am afraid we shall have to postpone the continuation of our field-work until next year; the slide-rule has jammed.

LEADER OF SEMINAR (to Flossie). The Demonstration Subject wants to join the course.

FLOSSIE. That would never do, students. It would confuse the all-important distinction between "we" and "they."

LOUD-SPEAKER. The Formal Opening, which was postponed last Monday, will take place next week, until when this Fair will remain, as it were, ajar.

FINIS

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" . . . General Ion Manolescu, 75-years-old leader of the Rumanian Youth Movement."—*Daily paper.*

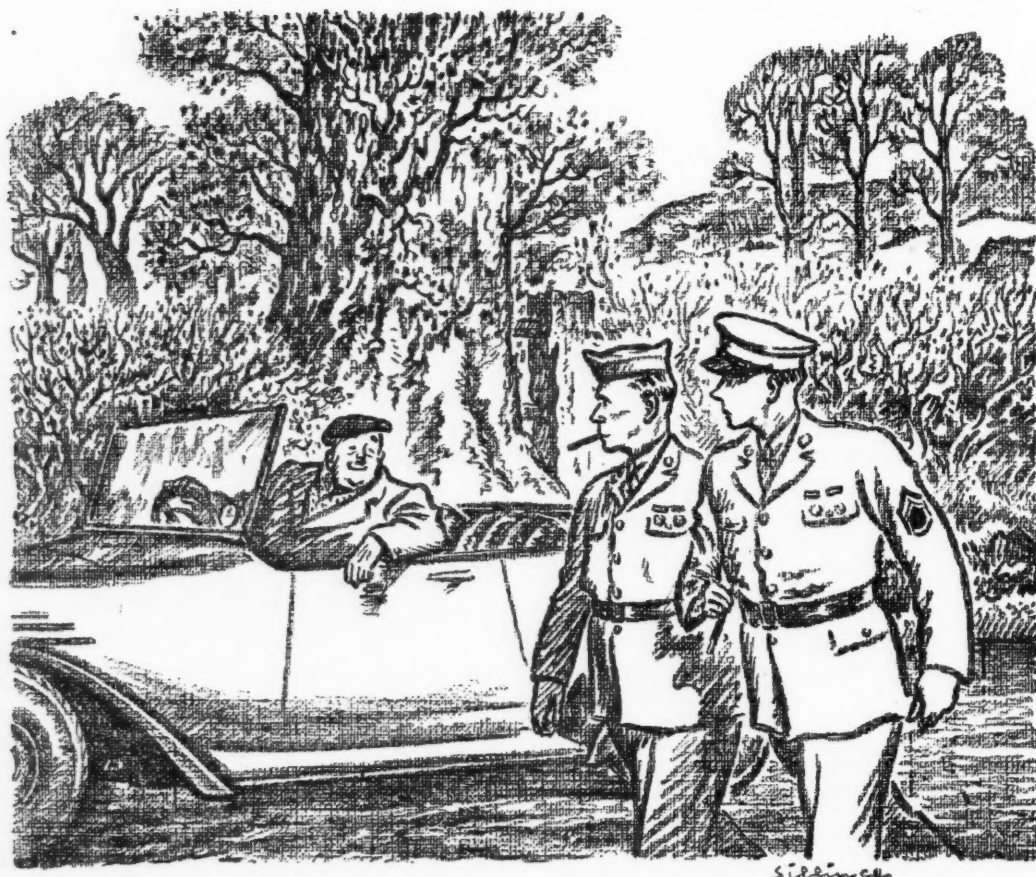
Si jeunesse savail . . .

o o

Statistics Corner

"Alderman Hewitt proposed that the minute be referred back. 'I cannot conceive there is any general demand for "Hansard"' he said. 'Some time ago we had a number of volumes of "Hansard" presented and I know it was only at great agitation that the Library Committee were persuaded to accept them at all. For 99 per cent. of the users of the Library, "Hansard" is not only Greek, but Hebrew and Sanscrit as well. I can only conceive of one member of the council who will read it. I think it is a waste of public money to order it. It is not needed and is one of the last things we want. You can read ample reports in the press.'

"Councillor Hibbert: I second. Alderman Hewitt said 99 per cent. but I say 999 per cent."—*Llandudno paper.*



"Say—can I give you boys an elevator?"

Tuesday at Ten

FOUR friends, and perfect golfing weather—
The wind's behind, the clouds are gay,
The greens are green, the turf is springy,
Tee up and send the ball away.

The whole long course lies wide before us,
With all the pleasures of the game
In which, like life, are many hazards
And no two lies are quite the same.

To-day I think of all those mornings,
The budding or the yellowing trees,
Footmarks across the dewy Second,
The sudden-rising partridges . . .

The foursome's gone, the friends are parted,
We shall not play this game again.

But of those many hard-fought battles
More than a memory shall remain.

Though Fate may have some bunkers yet
For Charlie's hook or George's slice,
We all shall reach the Green at last,
The Eighteenth Green in Paradise.

There Frank will never lift his head
And even I may learn to putt,
And then, together, we will go
To a Nineteenth Hole that's never shut.

But even there we shall recall
The beech-tree on our own last green,
The shots we fluffed, the happy shots,
And all the Tuesdays that have been.

E. S.



THE ISLAND-SPEARER



"Only the UTILITY hair shirts, Sir. Shorter in the sleeve and not REAL hair, but guaranteed to be thoroughly uncomfortable."

One Time

Saturday Night
DEAR MR. PUNCH,—We have all just done, patriotically, slavishly, the silliest thing. We have "put on" our clocks and watches an hour—another hour. That is, we have compelled our clocks and watches to lie. We have put our clocks and watches "wrong".

It is true that they were "wrong" already. They have been "wrong" (by at least one hour) for years. They have been "wrong" for so long that we can scarcely remember the days when they were "right", the days when our clocks said 1200—noon—and the sun stood—or rather whizzed—over the meridian of Greenwich.

To-day, when Big Ben said 1200—noon—the sun was over the meridian of Berlin. To-morrow, when Big Ben says 1200—noon—the sun will be over Moscow—or near it.

Print that again, please, Mr. Printer, in block type.

TO-DAY, WHEN BIG BEN SAID 1200—NOON—THE SUN WAS OVER THE MERIDIAN OF BERLIN. TO-MORROW, WHEN BIG BEN SAYS 1200—NOON—THE SUN WILL BE OVER MOSCOW—OR NEAR IT.

Now, why have we done this queer, unEnglish thing? In order that people may be induced—seduced, perhaps?—to get up at 0600 (G.M.T.) instead of at 0800, and to go to bed at 2100 (G.M.T.) instead of 2300.

This may be desirable or not. Many quite sensible people think it is not. But we are at war, and we will thrust them ruthlessly out of our way. The point is, if the said purpose is desirable and right, can it be achieved only by causing Big Ben to tell a thumping lie? I yield to no one in my admiration of Mr. What-was-his-name—Willett?—his ingenuity and pertinacity; and perhaps in his day it *was* necessary to do a national cheat with the clocks in order to persuade the ordinary man

to get up at 0700 instead of 0800 (G.M.T.). It was a new and startling proposal that we should get up an hour earlier (or two). But surely by now we have learned that lesson? And, in war-time, it does not matter a lot if we have learned it or not. The Government can tell us what to do. When the Government, for example, want to call up boys of eighteen, they do not first declare that all boys of eighteen shall count as boys of twenty. They call up the boys of eighteen and chance it. When they shut the pubs at a certain hour they do not soothe the public by pretending that it is really two hours later. Why, then, not make up their minds when they want the toiling masses—you and me—to get up, and say so. It could very easily be done—in war-time anyhow. The Ministry of Supply tells all the factories that their day's work is to start at 0600 instead of 0800. The Ministry of War Transport tells the

railway that the 8.15 must leave at 6.15 in future and the last train at 10 instead of 12. You could call the period on which we have just entered—April to August—the Six O'clock Season. And the clocks could keep the same Time all the time.

It is all very well, you see, to say that this second hour is only put on for a brief and special period in war-time. The first hour was put on for a brief and special period during the last war, not, I understand, for the original reasons advanced with such tenacity by the late Mr. Willett, but to save fuel and so forth. But that hour, the first bogus hour, is now with us permanently. Big Ben is *always* wrong—a thought that shocks me.

And tide-tables, nautical and air almanacs and such works, are always wrong. That is to say that those whose lives and vessels may depend on precise information are compelled to use erroneous works of reference and do unnecessary sums simply because the lazy landsman will not get up at 0600 unless his clock says 0800. This is a monstrous thing.

For example, I wish to find the time of High Water at London Bridge on April 4th and 5th and note them in my diary. My tide-table says:

April 4	11.29 A.M.	April 5	—
"	11.57 P.M.	"	1222
This now becomes:			
April 4	1329	April 5	0157
"	—	"	1422

In other words they have pushed High Water not merely two hours on but into the next day.

And to make things absolutely sweet and easy, some tide-table compilers *have* allowed for one hour of Summer time, but don't say so very loudly: so that when you add two hours you are one hour wrong.

Then listen to those honey-mouthed young ladies, who have to announce to the anxious world, on the air, that their next transmission will be at 1100 Greenwich Mean Time, 1300 British Summer Time, Five o'clock Desert Time, Four o'clock in New York, and who knows what.

All this seems quite unnecessary. Why should they not simply say 1100 hours Greenwich Mean Time, and stop there? One World—One Time.

The airman, speeding over the Atlantic—and elsewhere, I imagine—does this already. Greenwich Time is the time for him. The sailor, each day, employs the same illustrious measure for his calculations: but in Home Waters, at least, must countenance and share the national lie and solemnly say "The sun is over the yard-arm"

when it is really 10 A.M.* Do the teetotallers realize that Parliament now compels many good men to start drinking at nine o'clock* in the morning?

"One World—One Time." Why not? "Well", some people feebly splutter, "but then New York will have lunch at three or four o'clock!"* Why not? We now have lunch at ten or eleven. Indeed to get any food in London it is a good thing to start earlier still. It is a natural and an ancient thing for the huntsman to recline and refresh himself when the sun is high. It is a natural and an ancient thing for the sailor to turn to thoughts of gin when the sun is "over the yard-arm". But if these things ought to be done two hours earlier let us change our habits by all means—but leave the clocks alone.

Now some timid soul will say "But would it not be very insular and provocative to propose that all the world should use British Time?" Not at all. The whole world of navigators use it already, it is the only Time on their official almanac; and by this Time they fix the positions of the heavenly bodies and themselves. So that what is here proposed is only this, that the civilians of the world should do as the sailors of the world—use Greenwich Time and get up when they are told.

Sir, Big Ben, the friend of all the world, should never tell a lie.

A. P. H.

Entertainments

LIEUTENANT SYMPSON and I are still on detachment from our Own Company, and attached to the depot of what must be called for reasons of censorship the Dash Blank Corps. None of the officers of the Dash Blank Corps felt able to fill the recent vacancy for Entertainments Officer caused by an attack of sandflies on Captain Gaunt, so Sympton stepped into the breach.

"It's quite simple," said Captain Gaunt when Sympton visited him in hospital. "Ensa ring up and say there is a show coming on a certain day, and you just see that the Men's Mess (which is also the theatre) gets an extra good cleaning, and that the stage lights are working, and sandwiches laid on for the performers at the beginning of the show."

"Doesn't the Entertainments Officer do anything else?" asked Sympton.

*G.M.T.

"Just a bit of work on the nights there are no shows, which of course is about twenty-nine nights a month. The O.C. doesn't like to see any blank spaces in the entertainments programme; but Saturdays of course there is football, and you can fill up two nights by just putting down 'Library Open.' Actually it is open every night when the key of the book-box can be found, but don't put it on your programme more than two nights a week or the O.C. will kick up a fuss."

"What do you do on the other nights?"

"Whist drives are quite popular. I used to have them on Tuesdays. On Thursdays we had race meetings. Wooden horses, you know, like on board ship, and officers acting as bookmakers. The trouble is that you need eight officers, and you will not get them unless you are pretty popular in the Mess, because they almost always mix up the odds and have to square the accounts in the end out of their own pockets."

Sympton thanked Captain Gaunt and went away looking rather thoughtful. Two nights later he ran a race meeting, and had to act as bookmaker himself, losing ninety-seven piastres owing to not knowing the difference between four to one on and four to one against.

The following night he ran a whist drive, and ordered a lot of cakes by telephone from Cairo in case the Messing Officer rattled. The Messing Officer rattled all right, but the cakes arrived two days late, and Sympton made himself ill trying to get his money's worth by eating them himself.

Then he ran a sweepstake on when the Russians would get to Rognogradsky. Unfortunately he paid out to a man named MacEinstein when the Russians got to Rognogradshvitsch, thinking it was the same place, and as MacEinstein was transferred to another unit at his own request before the mistake was discovered this cost Sympton four pounds and eleven piastres. After that for some weeks there was nothing on the Programme of Events except Library Open and Church Services. In the end Sympton resigned. He said he did not mind paying for the replacement of library books taken away by odd soldiers repatriated to England, but when it came to obliging the padre with his second best pair of S.D. trousers when the padre sat back on the oil-stove at the conclusion of his address, and not getting them back owing to the padre going to Italy in a hurry, one felt one had done one's share for the entertainment of the depot.



"Are you together?"

Easter in the Office

I WILL say this for Easter: it's not like Christmas, you do know what day of the week Good Friday and Easter Monday will fall on without having to look it up on the calendar months beforehand, though even then you never know till the last minute with a man like Mr. Head whether you'll have to come in on the Saturday or the Tuesday.

Holidays or no holidays, we seem to have been spending half our time for weeks packing and unpacking, because with all these fire-raids Doris and I are getting quite suitcase-minded again, not to mention office-safe-minded. But we keep changing our minds about what to put in, because the things you want to save are just the things you want. Besides, as our refugee says, if you do pack what you think are your most valueless things now, you may

find at the end of the war they're all absolutely priceless.

All the same, give me incendiaries any day rather than high explosives! Not nearly as noisy, if you know what I mean. Though with H.E., of course, you do know where it gets to when you're fire-watching and don't spend hours looking for a smell of burning like us one of those nights we had a raid early in the morning. But once it flared up and they brought the pumps along we got on like a house on fire, if I say it myself.

What gets me about this new blitz is it's such a nuisance to fit in. In the real blitz you knew just where you were every night, and nothing to distract you, but now there's so much else happening you just lose all patience when those sirens go. And if there's a quiet night or two it sends you all

out and you sit there waiting for them to go before you go to bed. And if you are in bed, you don't know whether to put on what you were wearing yesterday or what you're going to wear to-morrow because, as Doris says, it really doesn't seem worth while getting a new siren suit this war. I must say myself I've just about got to the stage where it's like a bad film and this is where you came in and you're all ready to get up and walk out.

All the same I'd still rather be in London because there's so much more of it to miss. Anyway they can't make my flesh creep over all their boggy-bogy talk, because the way I look at it is if the Germans could do worse things yet, wouldn't they have been doing them all along?

Of course Doris always is in a rush every holiday and that midsummer weather sent her into such a stew, not knowing what to take with her to stay with her married sister at Richmond, because if you go away in a big coat you're baked with tea in the garden, and if you pack a thin frock and no stockings it's all thistles and you go all goose-flesh.

Her girl-friend who's in the Civil Service and doing for herself is getting nicely settled by now and short of nothing she's got. I'd never have thought you could do without so many things you could do with. Now she wasn't going to waste good coupons over glass-cloths, so she just bought a lump of blotting paper and stands the things on it after washing up unless the kitten's curled up on it already that Doris gave her after they'd had five baby kittens and the mother cat parked on them the night some people down the street's house had an incendiary.

Her girl-friend had mice when she first moved in, so Jim, my boy-friend in the Drawing-office, set a trap for her, but she didn't know what to do with the dead mouse, seeing the dustmen wouldn't be coming for another ten days. Doris thought the pig-bin, but they weren't sure, so in the end they took a torch till they came to a lamp-post with a litter-basket on it.

The kitten was so tiny Doris put him in a big Easter egg she had by her and Jim wanted them to call him Montague Egg or Poirot, being a detective-story fan, but they thought Winston was a nicer name for a cat if you suddenly had to start calling her Winnie, if it wasn't too common. But when they went to see about making a Narpac of him, they asked the girl did they have a lot of Winstons and she said no, not now, they were mostly Montys this year.

Doris's girl-friend is a bit fed up about her shopping though, because with being new to him no greengrocer would look at her and the only orange she got was two an old lady gave her who said people had been so good to her they'd go bad before she could eat them all. She did get two lemons, however, for the loan of her lemon-squeezer we'd all made fun of, so she gave us all pancakes for Shrove Tuesday and it all goes to show it's just a toss up.

She says returning exhausted licences to exporters all day long lately just made her tired, especially after the spot of bother they had in her department tracing a Wool Control form that went astray. It was weeks before they found that one of the new entrants had sent it to the wrong address, thinking the Joint Rationing Committee was part of the Meat Control.

With all their new staff her department has been in a bit of a mix-up and they took over a lovely big house up north for after Easter and couldn't make out why nobody else had snapped it up first till they found out its name, and then they decided it wasn't really just what they were looking for. After all, you can quite understand it would never do for a Government Department to give its address as Place o' Dreams.

Lady Addle's Domestic Front

Bengers, Herts, 1944

MY DEAR, DEAR READERS, —It is perhaps specially apt that I should write something on the fascinating and many-sided (or should I say "many-angled," in compliment to anglers all over the world?) subject of Fish. For at my old home, Coots Balder, were to be met with all the best and most fashionable fish of the day—I well remember how it was the custom for visitors to pick out the sturgeon they fancied for their own caviare from our famous Neptune Pool. (That pool is now a compost heap!) In addition to this my husband, Addle, is quite one of the most brilliant fishermen in England, and is the author of a very interesting book: *Baits and Bites on the Bannock* (published at 25/-, and now selling, with eight splendid full-length plates of outstanding fishes, for 1/6—a real bargain!).

I recall many amusing stories about fish. A great friend of ours, Gugglie.

Gore-Blymigh (Lord Gerald Gore-Blymigh), who was one of the wittiest men I have ever met, was once being heckled during the hotly contested by-election of Ealing in 1908, and had just skilfully evaded a difficult issue.

Voice from the back: Slippery as an eel, ain't yer?

Gugglie: That's why I'm standing for Ealing.

Of course roars of laughter greeted this brilliant sally, earning Gugglie many useful votes.

My mother's only unmarried sister, Lady Georgina Twynge (Aunty Gorge), was very energetic on the subject of cruelty to fish, which she maintained were quite wrongly called cold-blooded by callous sportsmen who didn't mind inflicting pain. She invented the humane hook for salmon, which doped the fish directly they took the bait, so that they couldn't be "played." This and other inventions earned her the name of "The Fishes' Friend," but like so many reformers she got of course more ridicule than thanks for her work, one of her bitterest critics being, I fear, my own husband. I myself think it was a fine ideal, but perhaps a little extreme, especially for salmon and trout fishing, which is so much part of a Scottish holiday.

But I must stop these idle fishing stories—though they are not, I assure you, exaggerated!—and get to business.

We, of the old school have perhaps witnessed of recent years the greatest revolution in fish which it is possible to imagine, and one which it is difficult for a generation brought up on kippers at night-clubs (which I am told was all "the thing" before the war) to realize.

"Never," said my old friend Emy Tottenham (Emerald, Countess of Tottenham) the other day—"never shall a bloater pass my lips. I would starve first." Yet Emy is now glad to obtain herrings, which she would never have tolerated in the old days. In truth there is a new aristocracy in fish to-day, as in other things. My dear mother would have held up hands of horror had anything been admitted to the nursery except Dover sole, yet now our children are nurtured on plaice, and before the war I remember seeing my little grandchildren eating haddock and being apparently none the worse for it! It is, indeed, a strange world we live in.

For myself, in this as in other and deeper matters, such as education, politics, domestic servants, my motto is *Noblesse oblige*. If it helps my country for me to eat skate, then I will eat skate. If I have driven one more nail in Hitler's coffin by breakfasting off kedgerree made with dried

eggs and frozen cod, then I am proud to feel I am sharing in the rigours of war. But let us not allow our standard to fall lower than is necessary. If we must eat the fish of the bourgeoisie, we must, but can it not at least be treated by *Debrett*?

Let me explain. It has become a necessity during the war years, I know, to buy fish we would only have contemplated for our cats, or even for the servants' hall, of yore. Cod, hake, some upstart fish calling itself rock salmon, another one called husk, with a far from pleasant appearance. But the manner in which we cook them lies in our hands. The French, I have often thought, are so clever in the way they make the simplest fare appetizing, and perhaps I have inherited something of this flair from an ancestor in the eighteenth century who was, I believe, half French. At any rate I delight to experiment with such dishes as Dabs Dieppoise (with winkles and shrimps in a little custard, which looks very much like the original sauce, though it doesn't of course taste *quite* the same), Grade A salmon *meunière*, and Husk *bonne femme*.

The last was the cause of an amusing incident. *Sole bonne femme* is, of course, cooked with a white wine sauce and sliced mushrooms. I was anxious to try this, for I had been to a very interesting lecture at Harridges on the subject of fungi, at which I had taken copious notes. All promised well. I gathered my fungi, sliced and cooked them, made my sauce with a little ginger ale I had by me, and proudly served it up. My evacuees pulled rather long faces, I thought, but of course they were not used to French cooking and we English are very insular about such things. But in the middle of the night first I, then one by one my guests, were suddenly taken violently ill. Wondering what on earth had happened, I staggered to my notebook and looked at it again. I then realized that I had stupidly neglected to read the word "not" in "These are not to be eaten." My poor evacuees took it all in good part—I told them it was right to suffer in the cause of science!—but I was very ashamed of my silly mistake, and insisted on treating them all to a whole day—lunch, tea and supper—in Watford, which they assured me would put them right sooner than anything. M. D.

New Sauce

"... canned marmalade will be on sole on points from April 2."—*Evening paper*.

At the Play

"SOMETHING FOR THE BOYS" (COLISEUM)

THINGS happen to a girl when she is deep in the heart of Texas, and perhaps we should not have been so surprised as we were the other night when *Blossom* (Miss EVELYN DALL) told the world that she was a crystal receiving-set. Lady-into-fox we knew about; but lady-into-radio was something fresh and a highly unprofessional metamorphosis for a musical-comedy heroine. It was *Blossom's* duty to have renounced (a) her fortune or (b) her lover, not to have gone blundering into witchcraft at a crucial point in the evening.

However, *Blossom* was a determined creature. She faced the fact and the Boys with simple courage, and it came right in the end because she was able to save the aeroplane that was taking her with the colonel, the crooner, and the other heiress, to Washington. You will have guessed already that the trouble was carborundum on the metal fillings of her teeth. If we had looked closely we should have found a programme note about it, but then we hardly expect programme notes in a musical play, certainly not scientific paragraphs which explain why residents within half a mile of an American radio station in New Jersey received local broadcasts "through their plumbing, steam-pipes, and kitchen stoves," and one unhappy man—in the true *Blossom* style—through his own mouth.

In the circumstances, the management might put the authors' names on the programme. Although we are told that the lyrics and music are by Mr. COLE PORTER and that the production is by Mr. FRANK P. ADEY, there is no salute to the authors of the book, the ingenious HERBERT and DOROTHY FIELDS. They found the root idea of the radio story in an American magazine and added to this fantastic snippet of higher education an equally fantastic but less improving fable about a will, two heiresses and an heir, a Texas estate, Army manoeuvres

(these supply the chorus), a hostel-cum-munitions factory for the wives of enlisted men (more recruits for the chorus), a senator's daughter, an angry colonel, and the eccentric *Mr. Twitch*. The plot, in short, is what the late Stephen Leacock would have called a moonbeam from the larger lunacy, and the authors should have their tribute if only for the high pathos of the moment when *Blossom Hart* confronts her friends as an unofficial receiver.

The dialogue seems, alas! to have withered on its Atlantic crossing.

serve their purpose. The score is an insistently cheerful clamour. No need here to let the sound of music creep in our ears; we are drummed into submission.

The trade-marks of the piece are noise and vitality. It is a brassy, bouncing, comic-supplement affair, relentlessly good-humoured. Miss EVELYN DALL, who has been known over here only as a dance-band singer, proves now to be a musical-comedy personage. She is seldom off the stage, and whatever we may think of her material, there is never any question about her ability to make the party go. She possesses enthusiasm and restless energy, her songs are jet-propelled, and whether she is Snow-White in Texas, a squaw at the Cadet Club ball (merely another piece of plot), or a new brand of wireless operator in mid-air, she manages to keep our spirits up and to hold the piece together. Miss DAPHNE BARKER's temperamental *Chiquita*, the other heiress, as dark as Miss DALL is fair, is also in the proper vein, and Miss HILDE PALMER has one agreeable song, "I'm in Love With a Soldier Boy."

The men suffer gallantly for the cause. Some of the jesting is in Basic Texan, and Mr. JACK BARKER and Mr. BOBBY WRIGHT can do little more than look cheerful and hope for the best. The hero, Mr. LEIGH STAFFORD, starts as a sergeant and ends as a lieutenant with *Blossom* by his side and "Hey, good-lookin'!" still in his mind as the theme song of a marriage

which may be stormy. A man does not wed a radio set every day, though we gather from the programme note that *Blossom* can cure herself—as the sufferer in New Jersey did—by brushing her teeth hard and regularly. (The carborundum, you know: it gets on the metal fillings.) For the rest, the Boys, numerically and vocally strong, are usually present and in full cry, and the Girls meet them now and again for a dance around the cross-roads or the Cadet Club, the patio or plaza. J. C. T.



BLOSSOM-TIME IN TEXAS

Chiquita MISS DAPHNE BARKER
Blossom MISS EVELYN DALL

These fantasies must have been funnier on Broadway than they are at the Coliseum, where, apart from the play's crazy-week framework—its own Dall story—and such endearing greetings as "Hey, uncouth!" and "Hey, good-lookin'!" we have to depend for entertainment on one or two individual performances and on the music and lyrics. The last are not in Mr. PORTER's most conquering mood. He can, as we know, build the powerful rhyme, but the lyrics of *Something for the Boys*, though they are naturally above the June-moon level, never linger in the memory. The first, "Congratulations," has something of the King Cole manner; others merely

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.

Music in London

ANOTHER MIXED BAG

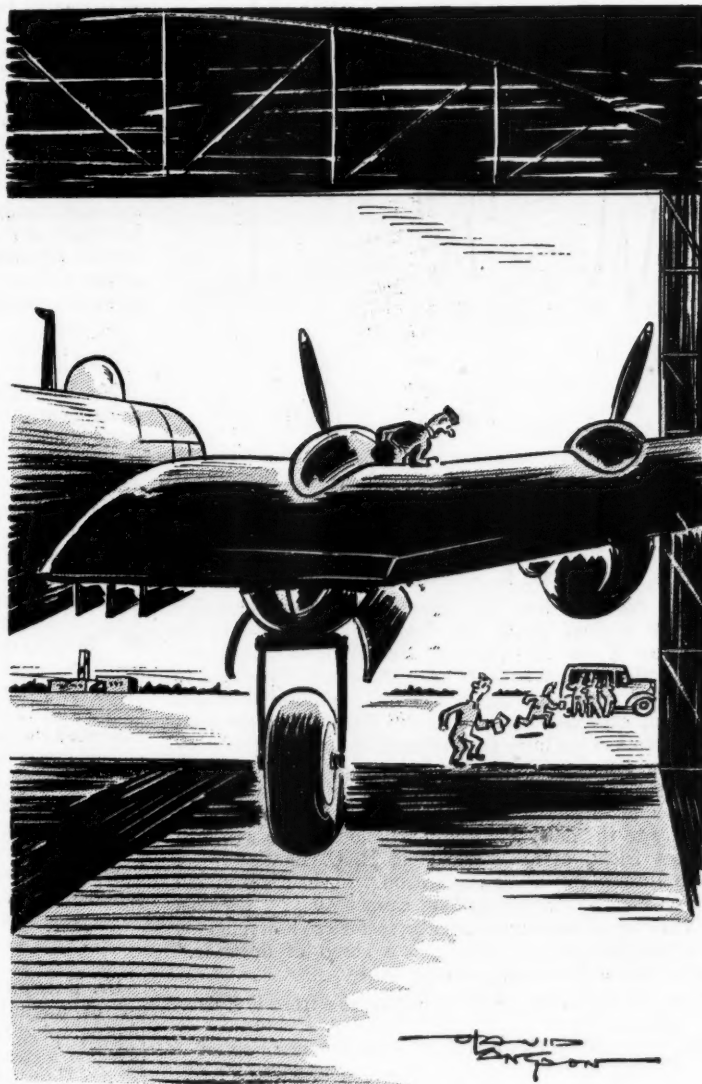
THE celebrations of the double event of Sir HENRY WOOD's seventy-fifth birthday and the Jubilee of the Proms. had their grand finale at a rather battered Albert Hall, where a packed audience (including HER MAJESTY and the two Princesses) gathered on a recent Saturday afternoon to hear its favourite music and to cheer Sir HENRY to the echo. Three famous orchestras joined forces for the occasion, and when the Jove on the rostrum unleashed their combined thunder in the "Ride of the Valkyries" it nearly blew the audience clean through the roof. It was terrific. A new hall is (fortunately) to be built in Sir HENRY's honour, and Mr. Punch hopes that this grand "old timber," as he calls himself, may long wag a stick in it.

Oratorio is a deeply-rooted tradition in this country, but it is long since any considerable new work in this *genre* has appeared. MICHAEL TIPPETT's "A Child of Our Time" was given its first London performance recently by the L.P.O., the London Civil Defence Choir and Morley College Choir, conducted by WALTER GOEHR. The Child is the Jewish youth who murdered a German diplomat in 1938, thereby unleashing a violent campaign of terror against the Jews of Germany, and typifies suffering and oppressed peoples. The music has moments of real beauty, but lacks dramatic intensity; and Mr. TIPPETT's libretto leaves one wondering whether his aim is a Jewish National Home, the Kingdom of Heaven, or the Beveridge Report. The climax of the oratorio is the chorus of Nazis singing "Burn down their houses. Beat in their heads!" but the music with its curious vagueness of tonality and complicated texture is too fragile for so brutal a theme as this, and the climax fails for lack of ferocity.

The concert of American music given by the L.P.O. and conducted by HUGO WEISGALL, in American uniform, was a most enjoyable affair. It began with "An Out-door Overture," by AARON COPLAND, which was full of jolly picture-postcard colour and brisk march rhythms—far more attractive than COPLAND's rock-like piano sonata which was played recently (FRANZ OSBORN was the Sisyphus) and caused beads of perspiration to burst from one's brow. The chief item on the programme was the neo-classical First Symphony of ROGER SESSIONS, which was having its first performance in England. This is as full of melody as

COPLAND's music is lacking in it, but has the quality common to much music written in the 1920s of looking even more difficult than it sounds. Mr. WEISGALL's changes of beat in the first movement made one positively dizzy as the music rushed along with an impetus like the Chicago Flyer from the trumpet-call at the beginning until it deposited one breathless at the final chord. After this the slow movement came as a surprise and a delight, for here the composer has given full rein to his genius for musical line-drawing—a seemingly unending melody which

begins in the strings over a sonorous pedal of horns, trumpets and trombones, and grows and expands into one of the most beautiful long-drawn-out sound-friezes that it has been my good fortune to hear—the finest piece of native American music that I remember. The symphony ends with a rondo on a gay folk-dance theme. After that we had the brilliant and clever suite from WALTER PISTON's ballet "The Incredible Flutist," with a tango which de Falla himself could not better, as scrumptious as pre-war sugar-plums and Turkish delight. D. C. B.



"You know how I like it, Nobby—just luke-warm with bags of powdered milk and a tiny bit o' saccharine."



"Swished?"
"Psychoed."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

G. K. Chesterton

THERE are very few dull pages in this comprehensive biography (*Gilbert Keith Chesterton*, by MAISIE WARD. SHEED AND WARD, 21/-), though Miss WARD's enthusiasm flags a little, understandably enough, when harnessed to the task of trying to clarify the vast significance which Chesterton attached to the Marconi Case. But for non-Catholic readers the most fascinating chapters will probably be those which show Chesterton in his early years, when he was not yet committed to the views and beliefs of which he later became so prodigal a spokesman. "I share all your antipathy to the noisy Plebeian excursionist," he wrote to the great friend of his schooldays, E. C. Bentley. "A visit to Ramsgate during the season . . . has left in me feelings which all my Radicalism cannot allay." Giotto's bas-reliefs, seen when he was twenty, seemed to him religious in the grandest sense, and "not a shred of doctrine." In some verses celebrating tea he wrote:

"Nor heed the curses on the cup that rise from Folly's school,
The sneering of the drunkard and the warning of the fool."

In an essay on Queen Elizabeth, whom in later years he dismissed as "that highly cultivated and complicated liar," he pictured with intense sympathy the tragic death of "the greatest of Englishwomen." When he was already

in the middle twenties he wrote a poem in which he gloried in "the blood of Hengist." It is natural that youthful feelings and beliefs should be modified by time and experience, but it is unusual for them to be completely reversed. The youth who loved tea, Queen Elizabeth and his Teuton forbears, and shrank from wine, religious doctrine and holiday crowds ended as a fanatical champion of wine, dogma, the Common Man, the Middle Ages and Latin civilization. It is one of the merits of this biography that Miss WARD, although she regards Chesterton's conversion to Catholicism as the completion of his spiritual development, is by no means enthusiastic about some of the extravagances which were a by-product of this conversion. While she approves in some respects of the influence Belloc exercised on Chesterton, she also regards it as excessive and injurious. Belloc, she says, tended to narrow the Faith to Europe, and Europe to France; and it is clearly Belloc she holds responsible when Chesterton in his *Chaucer* dismisses Caedmon as "an obscure Anglo-Saxon," whose poetry was "not in any sense English." "Only his (Chaucer's) debt to France is stressed," Miss WARD writes, "because England is to be thought of as part of Europe—and the part she is a part of is apparently France!" Although Chesterton was virulent in controversy, his blows were rained upon creeds, nations and ideas rather than upon individuals. In his private life, fully and sympathetically described by Miss WARD, he was kindly, lovable and rather helpless, anxious to hurt no one and on no less affectionate terms with men like Shaw and Wells, whom he was always attacking in public, than with those of his own political and religious beliefs.

H. K.

Skylark Farms, Ltd.

MR. DUNCAN MCGUFFIE has made good use of his time since he wrote *Spring Onions* two years ago. He has not quite shed the manufacturer's impulse to think of ploughmen as "personnel," and still feels that gangs of women are a happy concomitant of his undiscerning goal—"a full mechanization of agriculture." But he does try to humanize the business; and would perhaps succeed better if he thought less about standards of living and more about a healthy creative life. Much generous effort has gone to the making of *Cabbages and Committees* (FABER, 7/6). Together with his own market-garden at Kinwarton Mr. MCGUFFIE took over a derelict farm and lavished far more personal work and imported organic fertilizer than his three years' lease, from a War Agricultural Committee, commercially warranted. This is the most interesting exploit in a book crowded with exploits, and two conclusions reached in the course of the author's war-work deserve emphasis. The first is that the Ministry of Agriculture still knows too little about practical farming—in any case no two farms in England are alike. And the second, which follows from the first, is a post-war caveat. "When the farmer is on the job he must take supreme command . . . interference is fatal."

H. P. E.

Trout

DR. BARTON, in *Clear Waters*, has published a delightful set of angling sketches with sixteen quite admirable photographs, taken by himself and produced with proper margins instead of being allowed to sprawl all over the page. How Messrs. SEELEY SERVICE got hold of the apparently pre-war paper and produced the whole at 12/6 passes my comprehension. Of course there are any number of debatable points; there is a very attractive theory that one reason why the trout in a river cease to rise as freely

as they used to is that they have been raised from a strain of fish not used in their native haunts to rising for the fly (or at least the dry fly). This really renders unnecessary Dr. BARTON's acceptance of the pure superstition that trout become shy because they have been hooked. He is rather a purist, and will only recognize the dry fly and the exact imitation nymph; my own experience is that there are days when the damp in the air makes the natural fly, or at least such flies as the Willow and Alder, sink a fraction of an inch below the surface, so that the fish misjudges a floating fly and misses it or gets off. I am very much fascinated by his belief in the value of a scarecrow for keeping herons away. My own clothes when I have done with them would never deceive a heron, but one of my partners is a bishop, and what heron would dare to poach under the eyes of an episcopal scarecrow? This book should be in every angler's library.

W. L. K.

The Ladies' Lyre

If one had ever doubted, in the land of Dorothy Wordsworth, Emily Brontë and Christina Rossetti, that a woman's genius was in its highest flights domestic or cloistral, *Poems by Contemporary Women* (HUTCHINSON, 5/-) would confirm the traditional impression. This slim anthology—which claims to be comprehensive and has no Frances Cornford, no Edith Sitwell—is compiled by Mrs. T. ROSCOE and Miss M. W. WERE from the verse of eleven members of The Women's Society of Journalists and eighteen others. Most of its numbers strike one as meditations rendered into metre rather than the issue of a compelling (or even happily-indulged) visitation of the Muse. There are of course exceptions. Ruth Pitter's "The Sparrow's Skull" and Viola Meynell's "Dawn's First Voice" convey a great gale of the spirit and a gentle gust with equal conviction. Joyce Grenfell's "Summer in Wales" is pretty enough to make amends for a Cockney rhyme. Camilla Doyle's war-poems have the unstrained delicacy of observation you expect from a painter of the Norwich School. But this is, on the whole, an unenterprising and unwomanly little book. There is no satire, no epigram, no song that sings itself. There is only one small child portrayed in it and he—*absit omen*—is dead.

H. P. E.

William Blake

A good deal of literary criticism nowadays is produced under the joint influence of Marx, who referred everything to external causes, and Freud, who referred everything to internal causes. It is a confusing mixture, especially when applied, as in Mr. J. BRONOWSKI's *A Man Without a Mask* (SECKER AND WARBURG, 8/6), to someone already so difficult as William Blake. It is, however, possible to isolate Mr. BRONOWSKI's account of the Industrial Revolution from his dealings with Blake; and read for its own sake, as a section of English history viewed from the Marxist standpoint, it is both coherent and interesting. "The year 1757, in which Blake was born, was a year of dearth." After explaining why this was, and why years of dearth became increasingly common as the century proceeded, Mr. BRONOWSKI turns to the American Revolution (during which, he reminds us, Blake grew to be a man), and so to the Gordon Riots ("William Blake was among those at the head of the crowd which burned Newgate prison on 6th June, 1780"). The impact of the French Revolution on Blake's mind, and the care he had to exercise not to express his revolutionary sympathies too explicitly, account to Mr. BRONOWSKI for the shifting rhetoric and helpless long-windedness of the

Prophetic Books. It was perhaps a relief to Mr. BRONOWSKI, it is certainly a relief to his readers, when he gets back to the Industrial Revolution and the war between Pitt's government and the workers, which ran concurrently with the war between Pitt's government and Napoleon. In the last third of the book Blake is the main theme. Of the kind of help the reader will find here he may judge from this example—"An able critic seems to hold that we understand Blake when we think he was oversexed. This is a reasonable guess; the other reasonable guess is that he was undersexed. Both guesses are helpful."

H. K.

History in the Novel

On occasion it becomes a positive duty to seem lazy, to quote instead of creating. Here, for instance, on the jacket of *Wide is the Gate* (WERNER LAURIE, 12/6) appears the perfect appreciation of Mr. UPTON SINCLAIR's novel. It is from Mr. Shaw and begins "When people ask me what has happened in my long lifetime I do not refer them to the newspaper files and to the authorities, but to Sinclair's novels. They object that the . . ." But it is no use: one cannot bear even to seem lazy. The present book, one of a series that roams Europe and America and other places where political trouble may be brewing, continues the intelligent if ineffectual progress of *Lanny Budd*—who butters his bread on the proceeds from guns and has long had scruples about the amount and source of his income. His compromise is to collect information from the powerful and repressive for the benefit of the weak and enlightened. So Hitler, Goering, Zaharoff, Mussolini, Laval and the rest become personal participants in the tale, and the journeys of the "pink" art expert are ingeniously made to tell the history of Europe in the four or five years before this war. The book is distinguished from most political novels by the character of the author, whose shrewdness, cynicism and immense worldly experience admirably fit him to act as a Greek, or explanatory and critical, chorus.

J. S.



"A common or garden L.A.C.'s not good enough for you; you've got to have him an Air Commodore."



"Dash my wig! That cannon-ball must have struck very near."

Speaking to the Men

OUTSIDE the door I take a last fortifying pull at my cigarette before treading it underfoot; I check my greatcoat buttons rapidly lest any of them should be unfastened. Tucking my folder of notes under my left arm so that my right shall be free to wave the class back to their seats, I sweep into the room. It is empty. I have come to the wrong room. Making the best of a bad job I give it a lightning inspection, finding it faultless except for the cigarette-end I have brought in on my shoe.

Crossing the corridor I enter another room, where a class of Poles is being lectured by a Polish officer. He says something to me which has a courteous inflexion. I salute and back out.

In Classroom H.7 I find my audience. On my entrance they rise thunderously to their feet, kicking their chairs backwards with horrible squealing

noises, stamping their feet and uttering muffled groans as they strike their knee-caps on the low desks. I wave them back to their seats, but my folder has somehow transferred itself to the other hand now, and papers skim out of it across the room. To return these to me the competition is fierce, two sergeants almost coming to blows over a bill for my complete officer's outfit.

Order is restored. There is silence. The dust settles. Thirty pairs of eyes, alert, brightly expectant, are focused upon me. I am suddenly aware what it is like to be a cynosure. The men are sitting upright, their hands in their laps, their knees uncrossed. I wish most earnestly that I could take my place amongst them and that someone else could take mine. I descend from the rostrum and move without haste to the window. I feel the eyes following my easy confident

progress. I pretend that something has caught my attention on the path outside—a cat perhaps, or a bird, or a cigarette-package. I watch it out of sight, whatever it is, and turn to face the eyes. They are as brightly expectant as ever.

It occurs to me to begin my talk from where I am standing. It would be unusual, I feel, to ignore the little raised table. The only thing is that my folder of notes is on the little raised table, and without it I have no idea how to begin. How had I intended to open my address? It was an anecdote of some sort, but I am unable to think what sort. How long has the silence lasted now? A long time.

I take a deep breath, and speak. "You may smoke," I say.

The commotion caused is gratifying. It is also a relief, and I see that I shall gain valuable time. Some men

without cigarettes are having to borrow them from their friends. Some of them have no matches. In an access of democracy I offer a cigarette to a pale corporal in the second row. He refuses respectfully, but takes my case and passes it along. As all the men in the row are already smoking the gesture becomes merely silly, and it is a false move, in any case, because I should really have seized my opportunity to get back to the rostrum, whereas I now have to wait for my cigarette-case to come back to the pale corporal.

I have no idea what the C.O. will say if he comes in and finds everybody smoking at eleven o'clock in the morning. I have no idea why I told them to smoke. I conceive the idea, but abandon it instantly, of telling them to stop smoking. Things are getting very quiet again. I shall have to start. It is awful.

I flick open my folder casually, with the air of a man who never speaks from notes but has somehow acquired the lecturer's conventional trick of carrying them about with him. I should like to be more certain than I am that this effect registers itself properly. I have a suspicion that I have the air of a man who reads his lectures from upper-case typescript. In fact I should like to be certain that I have the air of a man who can read.

I glance at my notes for a fraction of a second only, hoping that the quickness of the glance will deceive the eyes. It deceives me, at any rate, because when I look up after that quick glance I realize all too late that my first note reads, "One Officer's G/coat, £14 14s." It is that damned tailor's bill. Nevertheless I begin to speak. Further temporizing is unthinkable. I am not at all sure what I am saying, because I am hunting through the folder for my proper notes all the time. It comes to me gradually that I am asking the men not to throw their cigarettes on the floor. One of the reasons, I am pointing out, that smoking is ordinarily forbidden in the classrooms is that cigarette-ends get thrown on the floor. . . . Where the hell are my notes? . . . If those men who threw cigarette-ends on the floor would only realize that every cigarette-end thrown on the floor had to be swept up off the floor by somebody or other who would otherwise be able to devote the whole of his time to essential war work, then men would not throw cigarette-ends on the floor. . . . It is ridiculous that my notes should not be here. I wrote them out myself, with the headings in block letters, underlined in red pencil. . . . It is a quite unusual privilege that

my present audience has been given permission to smoke, and I shall be obliged to regard it as something in the nature of a breach of faith if they throw their cigarette-ends on the floor. Only this morning I inspected a classroom farther up the corridor on the other side, and the first thing I noticed, right inside the door, was a cigarette-end thrown on the floor. . . .

I glance upwards and outwards. The eyes are fixed glassily upon me. I realize that my voice has been raised, that I have been tearing them off a pretty fearful strip. I see that their cigarettes are being prematurely extinguished and stuffed away into pockets. Their faces are white and serious. If only I had the slightest idea of the subject of my talk, even, it would be something.

"Have you been told," I demand on a sudden inspiration, "what I have come to talk to you about?" It is unlikely that they have, I reflect

hopelessly . . . but there is a lovely, lovely, "Yes, sir," rising from their dry lips. Will they say more? Will they? Surely there is one man who will want to tell me what he has been told I want to tell him? A pause.

"Care and Cleanliness of Accommodation," says the pale corporal in the second row.

"Exactly," I exclaim, throwing him a dotting look—"and you may have heard the story of the soldier in North Africa who was dying for a cigarette . . ."

Well, they may have heard it. They are going to hear it again. The words begin to flow. I have remembered my anecdote. Glancing down, I even find my notes, with the headings in block letters and underlined in red pencil—all on the back of my tailor's bill.

O lovely notes! O lovely tailor's bill! O lovely pale corporal in the second row. . . . J. B. B.



"All right, you can stand the man at ease now, Sergeant."

Sometimes I Sits . . .

EVERY week or so in our unit we get a questionnaire to fill up. I can never quite make out what they are for, but I suppose there is a special department at the War Office that works all night on them and then tells the papers that there has been a Health Probe or a Religion Probe, or perhaps a Cultural Probe in the Army.

The questionnaire is usually divided into three parts. The first is Medical Category, Size of Hat (I have never been able to do this because I have never had one that fits), Religion and Date of Last Inoculation. The middle or variable part sometimes want to know if one has any experience of artesian wells, sometimes what were one's average earnings for the period April 1st 1936 to March 19th 1937 (if none, write H.4), sometimes if one thinks blue is better than white. The last part is always Hobbies, and that is what defeats me.

I am not much of a one for making tin-openers out of battleships or collecting the blotting paper of famous men. Not now, anyway. Of course before the war I had a hobby like anyone else. I used to make little men out of potatoes.

You may have heard me in the 5432nd edition of "In Town To-night." I often wondered if it got across all right. I mean, it was interesting enough in the studio because they could see me making my little men.

"To-night (Bom)," they said, "we bring you Mr. Boddery (Bom Bom Bom), who makes little men out of potatoes. Good evening, Mr. Boddery. Would you mind telling us how you came to start, and why with potatoes particularly?"

"Well," I said, "one day I was walking down the road when I saw a little man eating potatoes, and I suppose I just connected the two ideas, like."

"And tell me, Mr. Boddery, do you ever make little women as well?"

Well, actually I never did. Who ever heard of little women being made out of potatoes? It's too ridiculous. But it was a lady announcer and I didn't want to offend her, and the next thing I knew she was saying "You will now hear the sound of

Mr. Boddery's knife as he makes a little woman for us. . . ."

But that is another story. How I do run on! The point is that I haven't really got what you could call a hobby now, because since being in the Army I have realized that I might be sent to some lonely spot where there aren't any potatoes, and thus be at a loose end, as they say. So instead I have taken up Speculation, because that is the only thing that doesn't need anything of which there may be a shortage.

By Speculation, of course, I don't mean buying mountains and balloons and things and selling them when they go up. I mean *thinking*. I think, for instance, about the best way to keep afloat if you fell into a sea of marmalade. Would it be better to keep quite still and thus only sink gradually, until somebody came with ropes (as they always do)? Or should you kick about? At first I thought a very slow breast stroke would be best until I saw that once you get your head under you would never get it out again, so now I am not so sure. Of course I admit you are not very likely to fall into a sea of marmalade, at least not before the Beveridge Plan is in operation. But you might quite easily fall into a bog, like Carver Doone, and marmalade is of the same viscosity as bogs but more interesting to think about.

Then I thought of a scheme for the

cinema industry, to overcome the silly way the wheels always go backwards on the screen. You could have an axle inside *the* axle, attached to a dummy wheel outside *the* wheel and not quite touching the ground, if you follow me, and driven by another little engine. This other engine would drive the dummy wheel backwards so that it came out forwards on the screen.

At the moment I am thinking about the problem of the Fifteen Thousand Music-lovers. When they had the Proms at the Queen's Hall, which held about five thousand, it was always just nicely full. Now, when they have them at the Albert Hall, which holds about half a million, they always have at least twenty thousand. Now, what were the other fifteen thousand doing when the Proms were at the Queen's Hall? One never observed fifteen thousand sad-eyed people roaming the streets round Langham Place and listening through keyholes. I know some people say the war has done it and that the fifteen thousand are all new ones; but this cannot be true, because everybody I have ever spoken to at the Albert Hall has said that this was not like the old days at the Queen's Hall.

So you see there are plenty of things for my Speculation. I need no apparatus, and I can do it anywhere—as a matter of fact I usually do it sitting under my bed.

But I have never liked to put it down on these forms as my hobby, because I feel that it would only lead to a lot of silly questions. So no one here knows about my speculation. I must admit, however, that I was afraid someone had guessed the other day. I was sitting under my bed speculating when a sergeant put his head round the door (the rest of him was outside of course) and shouted "Is there anyone here who can speculate?" Naturally I assumed that this was one of those are-you-a-pianist-well-move-the-sergeants'-mess-piano tricks and that they wanted someone to move the Colonel's book-case, so I kept quiet.

I was very annoyed afterwards when I found that they had been looking for people to post to the Probe Department at the War Office.



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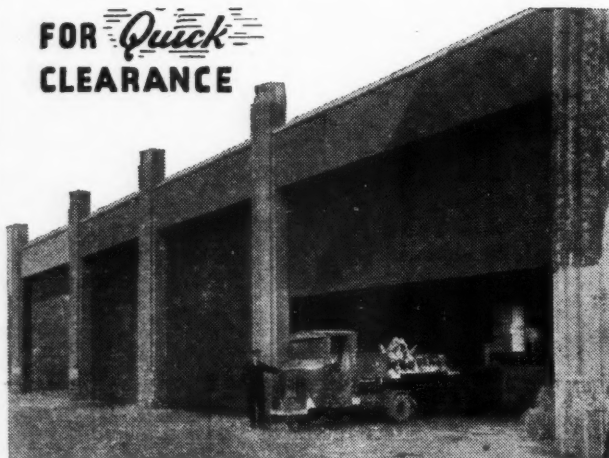
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